

STRATEGIC SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGIES ON ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY: A CASE OF GITHUNGURI DAIRY COOPERATIVE SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

The dairy produce industry in Kenya has experienced several challenges following the acquisitions of small companies by Brookside Dairy Limited. The acquisitions changed the market dynamics as the number of players reduced and the market dynamics of determining prices were changed. The main objective of this study was to determine the strategic succession planning strategies and organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. This study was guided by the following specific objectives: to analyze the effect of human resource planning on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society; to assess the effect of mentoring programs on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society, to analyze the effect of benchmarking programs on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society and to establish the effect of strategic training programs on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society. The study would benefit different stakeholders including: policy makers, future scholars and academicians, and the management team at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society and other SMEs. This study was anchored on the social cognitive model of career development because succession planning is about career planning of the staff. Other theories included: stakeholders' theory, Baldwin and Ford's transfer of training model, the human capital theory and the theory of Strategic balancing. The study will applied descriptive research design. The target population of this study was the senior and

middle level managers at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. The study undertook a census of all the 165 senior and middle level management staff at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. The study used both primary and secondary data for analysis. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire that contains open and closed ended questions. The collected data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages. The study also conducted a multiple regression analysis to help establish the relationship between strategic succession planning strategies and organizational productivity. The analyzed data was presented using tables and charts. The study found out that there was regular evaluation of job descriptions of employees which aligned to key performance indicators (KPI), employees were allocated to mentors within the organization who conduct mentoring in a structured manner which are tailored to the needs of Githunguri Dairy Co-operative Society, company benchmarks the knowledge of its senior management to those of best performing companies in the world and best performing companies in Kenya and learning programs are arranged to improve the knowledge level of staff to international standards and training policy supports learning among staff. The study concludes that human resource planning; mentoring programs, benchmarking programs and strategic training programs have a positive and significant effect on organization productivity. The study recommends that Githunguri Dairy Co-operative Society should implement human resource planning, mentoring programs, benchmarking programs and strategic training programs in order to have

better organization productivity in case of management change.

Key Words: *strategic succession planning strategies, organizational productivity, Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society*

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and its effects are pushing management teams in different organizations to look for strategies that would ensure their profitability and survival. For any organization or individual to survive in a competitive environment they have to utilize the available resources for their future benefit (Rothwell, 2011). One of the key resources for organizational competitiveness is the level of coordination at the top leadership level. Many companies implement retention strategies and fail to realize the importance of developing and implementing a strategic succession plan to increase productivity in organizations. Njiraini (2011) defines Strategic planning as a process of developing a vision, mission and objectives.

Strategic succession planning embraces not only identifying qualified and motivated candidates for promotion to executive positions, but also developing their capabilities in a manner that will prepare them to perform effectively in leadership positions (Stinchcomb, Mancini & McCampbell, 2010). It is management's responsibility to set the organization's goals and process methods for achieving them. Most importantly the central goal is to increase organizational productivity through the efforts of all employees at all levels. Productivity occurs in proportion to the concern and attention employees give to each input component. Thus the management of an organization's human resource necessarily involves devising and implementing policies and practices which enhance the productivity of its employees (Grant, 2008). Wang'ombe and Kagiri (2013) investigated the effects of succession planning strategy on the performance of international Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) in Kenya. The study findings showed that talent attraction, talent retention, career management and training and development had a big influence on the performance of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). The study further found out that these four variables jointly contributed to 64% of corresponding change in the performance of INGOs in Kenya.

A succession planning process is most effective when it is a systematic effort that is deliberately planned by the management and is driven by a written, organization-wide statement of purpose and a policy. Rothwell (2011) noted the importance of strategic succession planning in the after effects of the recession in 2007, the terrorist activities and the many corporal scandals that are many in organizations, then it is safe and prudent to plan for succession. In New York, Kowalewski, Moretti, and McGee (2011) examined succession planning utilized by the 2010 "Best Companies to Work for in New York". The respondent companies were grouped as either small or medium companies (15-249 employees) or large companies (250 + employees). The study examined 40 companies listed as "Best Companies to Work for New York 2010" determined by a survey of all public and private, profit and not-for-profits that had been in business at least one year with locations in New York State employing a minimum of 15 employees (Best Companies to Work for In New York).

Demographically, survey respondents reported that their organizations were founded as early as the 1820s to as recently as 2006 providing companies that had been in business for a significant time period versus a relative short time (five years). The findings indicated that 84% of the firms that had a succession plan in place were doing well in productivity, in the next three years. Companies that view education as an investment and a logical step in their succession plan were seeing this investment pay off as their employees recognized that they could become strategic planners, managers, and future leaders of their company.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business survey, indicated that slightly more than one third of independent business owners planned to exit their business within the next 5 years and within the next 10 years two-thirds of owners planned to exit their business. The survey also found that small and medium sized enterprises were not adequately prepared for their business succession as only 10% of owners had a formal, written succession plan; 38% had an informal, unwritten plan; and the remaining 52% did not have any succession plan at all. These findings show how succession planning was a challenge to continuity and overall business performance of small and medium size enterprises (SMEs). The study by Tambe, Ye and Cappelli (2015) established that it was necessary for companies to leverage technology to drive an actionable succession planning program following previous findings that 62% of companies still relied on a paper-based solution. Major challenges in organizational succession planning included: high turnover, resistance by managers, jealousy at development of certain people and internal organizational politics. It was noted that many information technology firms were reluctant to invest in employee training especially in emerging technologies. They overcame organizational leadership challenges by poaching well qualified employees from organizations that offered high technology training programs. It was established that IT workers posted higher target wages when their current employers were investing in cutting-edge technologies training.

On the African front, succession planning done in organizations is one of the basic and fundamental goals for any organization and firm growth/survival. Adewale, Abolaji and Kolade (2011) in Nigeria, the case is such that it is imperative to employ some strategic human development concepts in order to achieve these organizational goals, bearing in mind that human resource plays a vital role. On the other hand, Emeka (2014) concurs that the survival of organization is through effective succession planning. Studies have shown that firms that fails to strategically put in place a well articulated effective succession planning policy will definitely encounter the problem of continuous existence and survival that may likely lead to liquidation. Mwemezi (2011) while looking at the situation as is in Tanzania mentioned that succession planning has become one of the most significant human resource management responsibilities within today's organizations. A strategic plan communicates the organization's goals and actions needed to achieve those goals (Mwangi, 2013). Strategic planning is perceived as a crucial component of organizational development and change management. Consultants and managers are expected to make strategic decisions that affect organizational performance (Akello, 2014).

In South Africa, while looking at the case of succession planning for Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs); Garg and Van Weele (2012) noted that succession planning is a major problem within Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) in Johannesburg. On the other hand, the small enterprises did not have any preference on either to recruiting from outside versus developing inside talent while in their process of preparation for succession planning. The author though noted that good succession planning added value to the Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) in South Africa. Furthermore, efficient and effective succession planning yielded higher sustainable enterprises with high chances of survival in the turbulent business environment. The authors recommend that Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) in South Africa needed to have a succession planning strategy in place since this sector has a big impact to the citizens through creation of employment opportunities for many youths (both skilled and unskilled; educated and uneducated). It also contributes a lot to the GDP of the South African economy.

Locally, a number of organizations have faced strategic organizational challenges which have negatively affected their performance. For instance, Tuskys Supermarket has faced leadership challenges following frequent wrangles among the directors (Murangiri, 2015). Being a family owned and run business, they at one time hired the services of a non family chief executive officer who did not last long at the helm of the chain retail shop. According to Abdille (2013), most family business survives for up to 2nd generation and contributes 60% of the employment and job creation. The biggest identified challenge in sustaining the family business was controlling for external factors which were paramount to the continuity and passing over the business to the next generation (Muciimi, 2014). The biggest problem was attributed to lack of strategic succession planning.

In another study, Muciimi (2014) sought to establish whether transitional challenges affecting family-owned businesses were a global view or not. The population comprised all family-owned businesses worldwide. It was considered useful to take a world view in order to bring out the common challenges applicable to family businesses world over. Purposive sampling technique was used (Murangiri, 2015). The study established the main problem to be when the family establishes a business and as the business and the family grow to big social entities, responsibilities and business functions change making it difficult for a simple family structure to deal with those changes. Abdille (2013) acknowledges a number of family owned businesses which have flourished due to proper succession planning as including: Bidco oil refinery that is run by a second generation of the Vimal Shah family, the multi-million shilling Philip Ndegwa's banking and insurance empire and Nakumatt supermarket chain. These businesses have soared from height to height because of better succession planning (Murangiri, 2015).

Dairy Farming contributes positively to human wellbeing in a variety of different ways, including nutrition through quality food products, income and employment, organic fertilizer as well as assets and savings (Muriuki, 2011). A dairy cooperative society is defined by Kinyenje (2013) as an association of individual businesses, farmers, ranchers, or

manufacturers with milk interests intending to cooperate in marketing, shipping and related activities often using a single brand name to sell their products efficiently, and then share the profits based on the production, capital or effort of each.

In Kenya the first dairy cooperative society was established in 1908 by the colonial rulers. Githunguri Dairy Farmers co-operative society was registered in 1961 and has revolutionized the Kenyan dairy industry by improving dairy marketing strategies (Githunguri, 2016). The liberalization of the cooperative movement in 1997 helped to turn the fortunes of the society. Liberalization afforded the management committee of the society the freedom and power to hire professional staff to steer the day-today management activities of the co-operative. Today the co-operative has 17, 236 members and 68 collection centers (Kinyenje, 2013).

In 2004 the society commissioned the opening of its own milk processing facility that led to an increase in profitability and size (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2009). Milk collection, processing and marketing is the core activity for Githunguri Society but it also provides other services such as input supply stores (mainly feed) and animal inspection services for member and provides extension and training to its members and staff. The expansive activities of the co-operative are taken care of by a staff of 318 employees that are recruited on the basis of an employment policy (Githunguri, 2016). Whereas the lower cadre staff is recruited from within Githunguri sub-county, management staff is sought nationally and appointed competitively on the basis of professional qualifications. It is significant that union employees have formed a trade union, which has entered a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the co-operative. This is increasingly enabling the co-operative to attract and retain competent staff relative to the era of state control when there was no employment policy but the discretion of the Commissioner of Co-operative Development (Wanyama, 2008).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The growth in Kenya's dairy sector has been heralded as a great success story, and yet further gains in dairy production and marketing are constrained by a wide range of problems (Kihanya, 2009). Like many other dairy societies, Githunguri Dairy Farmers co-operative society has gone through good and bad times and was bogged down due to politics and poor governance until 1999 when a new management team took office (Kihanya, 2009). The society then almost collapsed due to poor management, leadership issues and political interference (Muriuki, 2014). After the change of leadership, in the year 2012, Githunguri Dairy Farmers co-operative society also faced challenges in its performance as was the case in 1999. The sales of the society slowed down by 20%. The society also lost 12% of its market share to rivals. On this backdrop, the Cooperative terminated the contract of the former Chief Executive officer and engaged the services of another. The new CEO was hired competitively from outside the organization as opposed to those within the organization. This did not reverse the situation immediately as the poor performance continued for more than a year (Muriuki, 2014). This brings to question the effectiveness of strategic succession

planning strategies at Githunguri Dairy Farmers co-operative society. Are the strategies really working? Are the strategies feasible in the long run?

In 2010 July, Safaricom announced the exit of founding CEO and entry of the successor at the helm. This brought about uncertainty as the market was not sure how the new leadership was to perform. However, the performance of the Company maintained an upward trend to become the largest company in East Africa. Profitability of the company grew by over 100% from 15 Billion in the year 2010 to 31 billion in the year 2015 (Safaricom, 2016). Another example is KCB group. There was a change in Management in the year 2012 when the former CEO exited and the current CEO assumed position. This change in leadership did not negatively affect overall profitability as it grew from Ksh. 12.2 Billion in the year 2012 to Ksh. 16.5 Billion in the year 2015 (KCB, 2016). The case of Githunguri Dairy Farmers co-operative society poses a question of what exactly is the effect of strategic succession planning strategies on organizational productivity. It is against this backdrop that the current study sought to establish the strategic succession planning strategies and organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this study was to determine the strategic succession planning strategies and organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the effect of human resource planning on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society.
2. To assess the effect of mentoring programs on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society.
3. To analyze the effect of benchmarking programs on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society.
4. To establish the effect of strategic training programs on organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Stakeholder Theory

This theory was advanced by Freeman in 1984. The theory states that business organizations deal with a multiplicity of stakeholders. Customers, employees and their unions, suppliers, government and its agencies as well as the general public all have expectations that should be factored in when developing the direction and actions of organizations. Gamble, Strickland and Thompson (2007) argue that an organization's strategy-making and strategy-execution activities should not only be beneficial to the organization but should also be aligned with those of its stakeholders. The boards of organizations play a critical role by actively overseeing the organization's direction, strategy and business approaches; evaluating the

senior executives' strategy-making and strategy executing skills; instituting a compensation for top executives that rewards them for actions and results that serve stakeholder interests and overseeing the company's financial accounting and financial reporting activities.

According to Pearce and Robinson (2011), strategic managers must recognize the legitimate right of the organization's stakeholders when defining or redefining the company's mission. Stakeholders have justifiable reasons for expecting and demanding that organizations satisfy their claims in a responsible manner. Employees seek broadly defined job satisfaction, customers want what they pay for, suppliers seek dependable buyers, governments want adherence to legislation, unions seek benefits for their members and the general public expects the firm's existence to improve their quality of life. All these considerations should be factored in when developing the organization's benchmarking strategy. Thus the theory shows how management in an organization can develop a performance management system in an effort to increase its organizational productivity by incorporating the interests of various stakeholders.

Human Capital Theory

This theory was advanced by Garrick (1999) and it states that people are worth investing in as a form of capital. People's performance and the results achieved can then be considered as a return on investment and assessed in terms of costs and benefits. This theory can explain workplace learning because it concentrates on the agency of human beings through skill knowledge, effort in augmenting production, possibilities. Training attempts to close the gap by bringing employees up to, but not beyond, the desired standard or competence. The widespread investment in human capital creates in the labor-force that is skill-base. The relevancy of this theory to this study is that performance management systems at the work place equip employees with vital skills and knowledge which enables them to be vital assets that help sustainability of an organization.

The human capital theory postulates the importance of people in an organization and how in the end the organization benefits in terms of increased productivity, high returns, asset growth and increased quality of products, whenever an organization invests in its people. This theory relates the importance of employee development which constitutes training on organizational output for better customer satisfaction.

Social Cognitive Model of Career Development

This theory was formulated by Bandura in 1986. The theory holds that goals influence behaviors of the individuals to career outcomes (Crocitto, et al., 2005). The model mentions that individuals develop expectations of career success through social support systems like mentoring. Expectations are categorized into three dimensions; career achievement (reputation, learning from role), career development (promotion, growth opportunities), and career balance (work-family balance and well-being; as inferred in (Payne and Huffman 2005). The learning support offered influences the individual's expectation of career success

which in turn influences the individual’s beliefs about his ability and finally the outcomes of career decision making and goal attainment (Sosik, Godshalk & Yammarino, 2004). This theory posits that an ability to learn and be focused on the goals encourage developmental relationships including mentoring. The ability to be goal oriented is a stable trait Rousseau and Shperling, (2003) and the individual seeks to develop himself by striving to learn and focus his efforts on developing his abilities Cummings (2004) by being optimistic, hopeful and persistent, (Mitchell &Lee, 2001). This theory helps to explain the relevance of mentoring programs at the work as they influence organizational productivity. This theory is relevant as it reveals the actions that management in an organization can take in motivating its employees and gain the benefits. Benchmarking programs is one of the motivation tools an organization uses to gaining higher productivity.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Human Resource Planning

Human resource planning may be defined as an attempt to forecast how many and what kind of employees will be required in the future, and to what extent this demand is likely to be met (Graham & Bennett 2008). It involves the comparison of an organization's current human resources with likely future needs and, consequently, the establishment of programs for hiring, training, redeploying and possibly discarding employees. The HR plays a very critical role of the planning of organizational structures, as such a flat structure is ideal as it influences succession planning since it allows better communication and easier knowledge sharing in the organizations, which are parameters that would greatly help in implementation of succession planning (Meharabani & Mohamed, 2011). Human Resource planning enables an organization to conduct succession planning by systematically determining the future management needs of the organization and developing high potential employees to meet those needs (Mondyet et al., 2013). It is not predetermining who will be promoted into a specific position, but a method of ensuring that the organization will have individuals who are ready to fill key positions when they occur. Succession planning should be integrated into the organization's business strategy (Rothwellet et al., 2015).

Poor HR Planning and lack of it in the organization may result in huge costs and financial losses. It may result in staff posts taking long to be filled. This augment costs and hampers effective work performance because employees are requested to work unnecessary overtime and may not put more effort due to fatigue. If given more work this may stretch them beyond their limit and may cause unnecessary disruptions to the production of the Organization. Employees are put on a disadvantage because their live programmes are disrupted and they are not given the chance to plan for their career development. The most important reason why HR Planning should be managed and implemented is the costs involved. Because costs forms an important part of the Organizations budget, workforce planning enable the Organization to provide HR provision costs. When there is staff shortage, the organization should not just appoint discriminately, because of the costs implications of the other options, such as training and transferring of staff, have to be considered (Bowey, 2015).

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring is a tool that organizations can use to nurture and grow their people, and it's gained in popularity (Emeka, 2014). An organizational mentoring program deals with passing on knowledge, insight and how activities and programs are run within an organization from the older and more experienced staffs to the younger and junior staffs (Bryman & Bell, 2015). All these activities go into ensuring that the organization can and will survive into future times as knowledge is passed on from one generation to another. Mentoring is a joint venture involving both the mentor and the mentee.

According to Gichigi (2009), mentoring programs face several challenges including negative attitude on both ends –the mentor and the mentee; lack of sufficient knowledge and skills and a lack of clear policies for the mentorship programs. They lead to improved business

productivity and organizational performance. Muchau (2013) argues that in mentorship, the actions and activities are done without the expectation of personal or monetary gain on the mentor's part. They result in improved sales turnover for an organization, positive assets growth and higher product quality. The purpose of mentorship is for the mentor to share skills and knowledge with the mentee. For mentorship programs to be effective, the mentors need to have adequate knowledge and experience so as to influence their mentees positively.

Benchmarking Programs

Benchmarking is an activity adopted by many corporations, companies and organizations all over the globe in an effort to improve their effectiveness, efficiency in operations, productivity and performance (Ezell & Atkinson, 2011). An organization collaborates with similar firms in the field to learn and adopt some of their system in an effort to improve efficiency in their workings, effective in their process that results in higher organizational productivity. Organizational learning has been one of the key objectives of conducting benchmarking programs within a company (Adewale et al., 2011). Learning has been known to positively affect the performance in an organization. This is due to the fact that skilled and knowledgeable staffs use their know-how to improve the quality of products made.

Benchmarking programs is geared towards organizational learning and adjustment from the best firms in the industry or similar players in the market place (Pérez-Lombard, et al., 2009). Information about practices or performance obtained for other firms is thus useful in developing the benchmarking firm's operational and managerial practices. According to Mutie (2011), benchmarking of internal operations leads to greater sales in organizations, higher product quality and greater assets growth. There is a positive relationship between benchmarking and overall organization performance (Mutuku, 2010). For instance, the benchmarking activities adopted by the SACCOs have resulted in enhanced overall business performance as it has changed the internal operations and processes of the SACCO. The study also concludes that financial benchmarking has been associated with the highest SACCO performance (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Strategic Training Programs

Strategic training is all about creating a learning program in an effort to improve both the individual and organizational productivity. Training has the distinct role in the achievement of an organizational goal by incorporating the interests of organization and the workforce (Bryman & Bell, 2015). There are key things that any organization thinking of strategic training programs needs to handle in an effort to equip the employees with necessary skills and knowledge to improve their productivity and final outcome. Strategic training program must have aspects that clearly state the organizational training policy, which is created after conducting a training needs assessment which would give the training scope and the frequency in which the training needs to be handled.

According to Lechner and Wunsch (2009), those organizations which develop a good training design according to the need of the employees as well as to the organization always get good

results. Madahana (2010) further notes that the development of the human being as a valuable resource of an organization is often deemed a source of employee motivation which as a result of strategic human resource development contributes more to the employee performance and overall organizational performance.

Organizational Productivity

This measures the effectiveness of organizations' systems and processes, the efficiency in using resources available to the organization that results in higher output, increased profits to an organization and low costs associated with operations in a firm (Madahana, 2010). Productivity can also be measured in financial terms through increase in profits margins, return on asset and return on investment (Akello, 2014).

Its measure may also be in non-financial terms like increased efficiency, effectiveness and low operational costs (Brudan, 2010). The study will measure performance by looking at sales volume registered from one year to another, the growth in assets and the product quality. A positive show of organizational productivity can be seen through an increase in turnover, growth in firm assets, high quality product and service delivery and increase in number of staff working at the firm (Adewale et al., 2011). Performance in this study shall examine sales volume made by the company, changes in total assets owned by the organization and the quality of final products released to the market.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study was descriptive research design. Descriptive research design was preferred because it determines and reports the way things are and is appropriate because it is concerned with clearly defined problems with definite objectives (Kothari, 2004). The target population of this study was 165 senior and middle level managers at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. Since the population was small, the study undertook a census of all the 165 senior and middle level management staff at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. The study used both primary and secondary data for analysis. Primary data was obtained by the use of structured questionnaires. Primary data is that research data that is collected for the first time by the researcher hence original in character (Kothari, 2008). Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on targeted variables in an established systematic fashion, which then enables one to answer relevant questions and evaluate outcomes (Creswell, 2008). Multiple regression analysis was done to assess the relationship between the independent variable (Human Resource planning, Mentoring Programs, Benchmarking Programs and Strategic Training Programs) and the dependent variable (Organizational Productivity). The study conducted analysis of variance (ANOVA). ANOVA helps in identifying factors that are influencing a given data set. The results were presented in frequency distribution table, pie charts and figures graphs. The Regression model was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y= Organizational Productivity.

β_0 = Constant

β_1 , β_2 , β_3 and β_4 are Coefficients of the determinants the strategic succession planning and organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society.

ϵ = error term

X₁= Human Resource Planning

X₂= Mentoring Programs

X₃= Benchmarking Programs

X₄= Strategic Training Programs

RESEARCH RESULTS

Out of the 165 questionnaires distributed out, only 117 were dully filled and returned. This gave a response rate of 75%. On gender distribution of the respondents, majority 55% of the respondents were male while 45% were females this shows that all gender were well represented thus the finding was relevant and reliable for the study. On the positions level of the respondents, 14.5% of the respondents were senior level management staff while 85.5% were middle level management staff. On the number of years the respondents had held their positions, 13.7% of the respondents had been in their positions for a period between 1-5 years, 13.7% indicated a period between 5-10 years, 23.9% indicated a period between 10-15 years and 48.7% indicated a period above 15 years. On the period of time they had been working at Githunguri dairy cooperative society, 14.5% of the respondents had been working for a period between 1-5 years, 16.2% indicated a period between 5-10 years, 23.9% indicated a period between 10-15 years and 45.3% indicated period above 15 years.

Human Resource Planning

From the findings, there is a well articulated and strictly adhered to promotion structure as indicated by a mean of 3.84. The findings also indicated that the organization has a well established recruitment system, leadership development programmes have been established to develop leaders from within.

The results revealed that the organization conducts surveys among the staff for effective job allocation practices, practices job rotation in order to prepare the staff for various task, conducts surveys to assess the future workforce needs, practices internal employee transfer and has a well structured incentive for voluntary separation in order to manage employee surplus. This was shown by mean of 3.87, 3.95, 3.94, 4.06 and 3.88 respectively. The mean values for the finding ranges between 3.78-4.06 and this shows that the respondents were in agreement with the statements on human resource planning.

Mentoring Programs

Employees are allocated to mentors within the organization had a mean of 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.955, mentoring is conducted in a structured manner had a mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 1.019, mentorship promotes sharing of knowledge among staff had a mean of 3.81 with a standard deviation of 1.041, mentorship programs are tailored to the needs of Githunguri Dairy Co-operative Society had a mean of 3.77 with a standard deviation of 1.137, mentors within the company are adequate had a mean of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 1.175, mentors within the Company have wide knowledge and experience had a mean of 3.99 with a standard deviation of 0.960, mentors within the company have wide experience had a mean of 3.84 with a standard deviation of 1.005, sharing experiences with less experienced staffs leads to higher production had a mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 1.063, mentoring nurtures employees to be more efficient had a mean of 3.93 with a standard deviation of 1.006, senior management offer support to juniors for improved productivity at Githunguri dairy had a mean of 4.05 with a standard deviation of 0.875 and there is constant evaluation of our mentoring program had a mean of 4.06 with a standard deviation of 0.875. The respondents were in agreement with the statements on mentoring programs as indicated by the mean ranging between 3.77-4.06. This finding is consistent with that of Emeka (2014) that mentoring is a tool that organizations can use to nurture and grow their people, and it is gained in popularity.

Benchmarking Programs

From the responses, company benchmarks the knowledge of its senior management to those of best performing companies in the world had a mean of 4.11 with a standard deviation of 0.957, company benchmarks the knowledge of its senior management to those of best performing companies in Kenya had a mean of 4.13 with a standard deviation of 0.981, learning programs are arranged to improve the knowledge level of staff to international standards had a mean of 4.05 with a standard deviation of 1.131, organization strives to align its management practices to best known international standards had a mean of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 1.078, organization strives to align its management practices to best known local standards had a mean of 3.68 with a standard deviation of 0.738 while internal processes are reviewed from time to time to improve efficiency had a mean of 3.99 with a standard deviation of 0.782.

The results also indicated that operations have been standardized through ISO certification had a mean of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 1.089, benchmarking program has improved our effectiveness at work resulting in higher productivity had a mean of 3.64 with a standard deviation of 0.802, improved efficiency in operations has increased our productivity rate had a mean of 4.04 with a standard deviation of 1.083, improved managerial practices has achieved continuous improvement hence higher outcomes had a mean of 4.10 with a standard deviation of 1.063, benchmarking has improved our business activity resulting in higher productivity at Githunguri Dairy had a mean of 3.67 with a standard deviation of

1.105 and implementing best benchmarking practices has been associated with our success had a mean of 3.82 with a standard deviation of 0.906.

The mean values for the finding ranges from 3.54-4.13 which shows that the respondents agreed to a large extent that benching programs influence organizational productivity which concurs with Alosani, Al-Dhaafri, and Yusoff (2016) that the main use of benchmarking is to find best practices and then trying to apply them for the sake of achieving the organization's goals.

Strategic Training Programs

the training policy at Githunguri supports learning among staff had a mean of 3.84 with a standard deviation of 1.087, training at Githunguri Dairy is done after a training needs assessment had a mean of 3.71 with a standard deviation of 0.908, the training needs assessment are conducted more frequently to establish the skills gap had a mean of 3.93 with a standard deviation of 0.980, the training sessions are arranged more often had a mean of 4.05 with a standard deviation of 0.879, the trainings are detailed to cover key areas of employee performance had a mean of 3.70 with a standard deviation of 0.853 and the training sessions improve employee capability had a mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 1.079.

Effect of Strategic Training Programs on Organizational Productivity

5.1% of the respondents indicated not at all that strategic training programs had an effect on organizational productivity, 4.3% indicated little extent, 12% indicated moderate extent, 46.2% indicated large extent and 32.5% indicated very large extent. The findings imply that majority of the respondents indicated that strategic training affects organizational productivity positively. The findings agree with an argument by Madahana (2010) that the development of the human being as a valuable resource of an organization is often deemed a source of employee motivation which as a result of strategic human resource development contributes more to the employee performance and overall organizational performance.

Organizational Productivity

The respondents were asked to indicate the changes in their organization performance over the past five years in terms of sales turnover, asset growth and product quality for the period between 2010-2014. From the responses, sales turnover had a mean of 4.06 with a standard deviation of 1.064 in 2010, had a mean of 3.94 with a standard deviation of 1.077 in 2011, had a mean of 3.87 with a standard deviation of 1.094 in 2012, had a mean of 3.95 with a standard deviation of 1.037 in 2013 and a mean of 3.94 with a standard deviation of 0.981 in 2014.

asset growth had a mean of 3.88 with a standard deviation of 0.998 in 2010, had a mean of 3.69 with a standard deviation of 1.094 in 2011, had a mean of 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.955 in 2012, had a mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 1.019 in 2013 and a mean of 3.81 with a standard deviation of 1.041 in 2014.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The study conducted a multiple regression analysis to establish the relationship between the strategic succession planning strategies and organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. The study results are shown in the subsequent sections. The value of R is 0.947, R square is 0.898 and adjusted R square is 0.894. This means that the combined effect strategic succession planning strategies (human resource planning, mentoring programs, benchmarking programs and strategic training programs) explains 89.8% of the variations in organizational productivity. This further shows that there are other variables that explain the variations in organizational productivity which account for 10.2% of the remainder.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.947 ^a	.898	.894	1.25742

Table 2: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1550.574	4	387.643	245.172	.000
Residual	177.084	112	1.581		
Total	1727.658	116			

The ANOVA findings were used to establish the significance of the overall model linking strategic succession planning strategies to organizational productivity at Githunguri Dairy Cooperative Society. To determine the overall model significance, two methods were used. The first method was testing the significance of the F calculated value of 245.172 at 5% level of significance. The results in the table indicate that the F calculated value was significant at 5% level of significance since the significance value of 0.000 was less than 0.05.

The second approach which was a confirmatory approach involved comparison of the F calculated value of 245.172 with an F critical value which is obtained from the F distribution Table using the numerator degrees of freedom of 4 and denominator degrees of freedom of 112. This gives a value of F critical of 2.46. Since the value of F calculated which was 245.172 was greater than F critical of 2.46 that was (245.17 > 2.46), it implies that the overall regression model was significant thus confirming the previous findings.

The results from the regression model indicate that when all the factors are held constant, organizational productivity would be at 1.425. With regard to each variable, a unit increase in human resource planning holding other variables constant would increase organizational productivity by .517. The findings imply that an increase in human resource planning practices leads to a significant improvement in organizational productivity. The findings are

consistent with the findings of a study by Boyd (2008) who indicated that strategic Human Resource Planning practices ensures that the organization have the required number of employees with the right qualifications to undertake organization job task functions hence leading to high level of organization performance.

The results also indicate that a unit increase in mentoring programs holding other variables constant would increase organizational productivity by .206. The findings imply that an increase in the mentoring programs leads to a significant improvement in organizational productivity. These findings are consistent with Fleig-Palmer (2009) who examined the impact of mentoring on retention through knowledge transfer, affective commitment, and trust and found out that mentoring was important because it supported knowledge transfer amongst employees which is crucial for organizational productivity.

Furthermore, the results indicate that a unit increase in benchmarking programs holding other variables constant would increase organizational productivity by .118. The findings imply that an increase in benchmarking practices would lead to a significant increase in organizational productivity at Githunguri Sacco. The results are consistent with Mutie (2011) who indicated that benchmarking of internal operations leads to greater sales in organizations, higher product quality and greater assets growth. The study findings are also consistent with Bryman & Bell (2015) who indicated that financial benchmarking has been associated with the highest SACCO performance.

The regression results also showed that a unit increase in strategic training programs holding other variables constant would increase organizational productivity by .337. The finding implies that an increase in the frequency of strategic training programs leads to a significant improvement in organizational productivity. This is consistent with an argument by Lechner and Wunsch (2009) that those organizations which develop a good training design according to the need of the employees as well as to the organization always get good results.

Table 3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	1.425	1.122		1.270	.020
Human Resource Planning	.517	.026	.983	19.905	.000
Mentoring Programs	.206	.023	.013	.267	.000
Benchmarking Programs	.118	.027	.025	.647	.019
Strategic Training Programs	.337	.044	.030	.844	.040

The resultant equation becomes:

$$Y = 1.425 + 0.517X_1 + 0.337X_2 + 0.206X_3 + 0.118X_4$$

Where; Y = Organizational Productivity; X₁ = Human resource planning; X₂= Strategic Training Programs, X₃= Mentoring Programs; X₄= Benchmarking Programs.

CONCLUSIONS

The study made conclusions per objective based on the findings. The descriptive as well as the regression results led to the specific conclusions. From the conclusions, the study made recommendations.

Human Resource Planning

The study concludes that human resource planning is positively and significantly related to organizational productivity. Human resource planning practices such as well effected promotion structure, well established recruitment system, leadership development programmes, alignment of current human resource abilities to future organizational needs, incorporating human resource planning into the organization's business strategy, practices of job rotation in order to prepare the staff for various task and conducting surveys to assess the future workforce needs affect organization productivity positively.

Mentoring programs

Mentoring programs is positively and significantly related to organizational productivity. Allocating mentors to employees within the organization who conduct mentoring in a structured manner which are tailored to the needs of the organization, having adequate mentors within the company, having mentors with wide knowledge and experience, senior management offering support to juniors, having a constant evaluation of our mentoring program positively affects organization productivity.

Benchmarking programs

The study also concludes that benchmarking programs are positively and significantly related to organization productivity. Benchmarking strategies which include internal benchmarking (benchmarking against internal operations or standards) and operational benchmarking and industry benchmarking (benchmarking against other companies in the same industry) affect organization productivity positively. The study also concluded that the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of benchmarking include being composed of interested motivated people and identification of targets in advance, being tied to the organizational overall strategic objectives and understanding the processes.

Strategic Training programs

Based on the study findings, the study concludes that strategic training programs positively and significantly affects organization productivity. The study also concludes that a strategic training program is an effective management strategy which the Githunguri Dairy Co-operative Society use to remain highly competitive in the current business environment.

Employee supported the need for additional training hence the conclusions that frequent employee training is vital.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that Githunguri Dairy Co-operative Society should implement human resource planning strategies like alignment of current human resource abilities to future organizational needs, incorporating human resource planning into the organization's business strategy, practices of job rotation in order to prepare the staff for various task and conducting surveys to assess the future workforce needs to as to have stability in organizational productivity in times of change.

The study recommends that the organisation should have an effective coaching and mentoring programs aimed at supporting employees as they undertake their duties and responsibilities. This system helps management to develop good relationship with employees and identify talents that need to be developed.

This study recommends that in order to succeed in its benchmarking activities, Githunguri Dairy Co-operative Society should be vigilant in order to adapt to the changes in the external environment. Since benchmarking alone is not sufficient, the organization also need vision, energy and teamwork to increase its performance after a benchmarking activity. This would enable them to identify the key processes that need improvement and to search for applicable solutions.

The study also recommends that organization should formulate a training policy that provides for all the stakeholders to make contribution to the evaluation of training programs that is satisfactory to both staff and management. If training programs are acceptable to staff and management then it will be more meaningful and beneficial to the organization. Training should be relevant and should be evaluated.

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